

O YE PEOPLE! – COLLECTION OF VERSES FROM QURAN DIRECTLY ADDRESSING MANKIND

Muhammed Motaher Hossain, Bangladesh
Muhammad Nabeel Musharraf, Australia

ABSTRACT:

According to our study, there are 25 places where humanity has been directly addressed in Quran and reminded about some of the most important messages that they need to remember for their salvation. Some of these lessons we learn from current study are summarized below:

Allah SWT addresses mankind about the truth he sent down - a conclusive proof and a clear light. It is a clear instruction from Rabb ul Aalameen, a cure for whatever (disease) is in the hearts, and guidance and grace unto all who believe. Whoever chooses to follow the true guidance does so for his own good; and whoever chooses to go astray, does so at his own peril. The Messenger has come to you with this truth from your Lord and they give clear warnings so believe; it is better for you. And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O YOU [PEOPLE] of understanding, that you may become righteous. But if you disbelieve - then indeed, to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth. And ever is Allah Knowing and Wise. You are they who stand in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy. If He wills, He can do away with you, O PEOPLE, and bring others [in your place]. And ever is Allah competent to do that. Messengers and those who preach this noble message are there to convey only and are not responsible for the conduct of people they convey the message to. When the noble among us come to us and relate to us verses from the noble book, then whoever fears Allah and reforms - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve. We may neglect the message and messengers in this world but on the day of judgement, there will be no excuses and all what we do would be clearly in front of us. That would be the day when assembly of Jinns and Men will say, "We bear witness against ourselves". They will shamefully accept that they were deluded by the worldly life. Assuredly Allah's promise is true. So let not the life of the world delude you, and let not the Deluder delude you concerning Allah. Fear your Lord, for the convulsion of the hour (of judgement) will be a thing terrible! Fear your Lord and fear a Day when no father will avail his son, nor will a son avail his father at all. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver.

Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become God-fearing. This was the message of all prophets who remind mankind about their Lord to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. There is no deity except Him; He gives life and causes death. He has no partner and it only He who has power over everything. Those among mankind who invoke besides Allah will never create [as much as] a fly, even if they gathered together for that purpose. And if the fly should steal away from them a [tiny] thing, they could not recover it from him. Weak are the pursuer and pursued. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?

Allah has given us means to live our lives with all the resources He has surrounded us with. We can eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth and cover ourselves and beautify with the clothing

he has bestowed us. But while living this life and enjoying the bounties of the most Merciful, we have to ensure that we live our lives according to what our Creator and Sustainer wants us to live like. We should not follow the footsteps of Shaytan who is verily, our open enemy. We are all created from one man and women. Our nations, colors and other affiliations do not make some of us better than the others. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

With each passing moment, we are all moving towards our final destiny. All of us have to die one day and then be resurrected to taste what we do in this world. Allah SWT created us from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot, and then from a lump of flesh, formed and unformed. He settles in the wombs whom He wills for a specified term, then He brings us out as a child, and then develops us that we may reach our time of maturity. And among us are some who die early. And among us are some who return to the most decrepit age. Allah has control over all this. We emerge from a humble beginning – clot, and reach a humble end where we are dependent on others for our needs feel much pain before eventually dying. All what we accumulate stays in this world and we go empty handed. Why should we not try to earn something for the here-after?

We see Allah sends down rain upon barren land, it quivers and swells and grows things of every beautiful kind. We accordingly pray to our Lord to shower the rain of His blessings and love on our barren hearts and turn them alive again.

Everything has been very clearly laid in front of us.

O YE PEOPLE! What has deceived you concerning your Gracious Lord!!!!

INTRODUCTION:

There is no doubt in the holy Quran as it claims “laa raiba fehe” (02:02). It clearly lays in front of its reader what is right and what is not in a very clear manner. Allah SWT not only sent the book but also the greatest of teachers to explain it in the best possible manner. We have now with us these two great sources of guidance which invite us to ponder and think.

There are a number of verses in Quran which directly call all mankind and remind them of their obligations to their Lord and His creations. This study accumulates all those verses along-with simple extract of teachings for each verse. To understand the verses further and in greater depth, readers should refer to authentic commentaries and explanations of Quran. It should also be remembered that these are not the only verses which contain the words ‘O Ye people’ and it does not mean that these are the only verses that humanity in general has to follow. All of Quran and all of the teachings of our beloved master Muhammad ﷺ are sources of salvation for all of humanity. It is reported from Messenger of Allah ﷺ: “Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind” (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 7, Number 331). It is in our own benefit to dive deep into Quran and Sunnah and try to understand them in an unbiased and rational manner for our own benefit. I strongly recommend going through complete Quran with authentic commentary to get a broader idea of its message and the light it brings along. In present age, we unfortunately see a lot ill-intentioned people who misquote or half-quote Quranic verses to cast doubt and confusion. Only way to tackle such deception is to study our Islam from its very sources, understand clear

context and background of relevant verses and prophetic traditions and seek assistance from who have been blessed with right knowledge and guidance.

Brief explanation is provided with each verse.

VERSES: O YE PEOPLE!

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1) ADORE YOUR GUARDIAN-LORD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ {البقرة/21}

O YE PEOPLE! Worship your Lord (Allah), Who created you and those who were before you so that you may become God-fearing.

Brief Explanation:

In first 20 verses of Surah Baqarah, Allah SWT explains three groups of people: those who believe, those who do not believe and hypocrites. In this verse (and verse 22), Allah SWT calls all three groups together and invites them to the key message of Quran i.e. to leave worshipping created beings or not believing in divinity.

In starting the address, verse 21 uses the Arabic word 'An-nas', which signifies mankind in general, or man as such - so, the word covers all the three groups we have just mentioned. And the message delivered by the verse is: "Worship your Lord." The Arabic word 'Ibadah' (worship) connotes expending all energies one has in total obedience to somebody, and shunning all disobedience out of one's awe and reverence. Word Rabb refers to the one who gives nurture. Let us add that the choice of this particular name from among the Beautiful names of Allah is very meaningful in the present context, for the affirmation has thus been combined with the argument in a very short sentence. The word Rabb indicates that only He is, or can be, worthy of being worshipped, He is the final and absolute Cause of nurturing man - Who changes man through gradual stages of development from a drop of water into healthy, sentient and rational being, and Who provides the means for his sustenance and growth. This truth is so obvious that even an ignorant or intellectually dull man would, on a little reflection, not fail to see and admit that such a power of nurturing can belong only to Allah, and not to a created being. What can a creature do for man, when it owes its very existence to the Creator? Can a needy one come to the help of another? And if it appears to be doing so, the act of nurturing must in reality and ultimately belong to the One Being on whom both have to depend in order to exist at all. So, who else but the Rabb can be worthy of adoration and worship?

The sentence is addressed to all the three groups of men, and for each it has a different meaning. "Worship your Lord": the phrase calls upon the disbelievers to give up worshipping created beings and to turn to the Creator; it asks the hypocrites to be sincere and true in their faith; it commands the sinning Muslims to change their ways and try to be perfect in their obedience to Allah; and it encourages the God-fearing Muslims to be steadfast in their worship and obedience, and to make a greater effort in the way of Allah.

The two verses proceed to enlarge upon the theme by specifying certain special qualities of the Rabb: "Who created you and those before you". This is a quality which one cannot even imagine to belong to a created being, for it can pertain only to the Creator - that is, the quality of giving existence to what did not exist before, and of producing from the darkness and filth of the mother's womb a creature as lovely and noble as man.

In adding to the phrase: "who created you" the words, "and those before you", the verse shows that Allah alone is the Creator of all mankind. It is also significant that the verse mentions only "those before you" and not "those who will come after you", and through this omission suggests that there will not be any Ummah (a traditional community formed by all the followers of a prophet) to succeed the Ummah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, for no prophet will be sent down after the Last Prophet ﷺ, and hence no new 'Ummah' will arise.

The final phrase of verse 21 means: "so that you may become God-fearing". It may also be translated to mean "So that you may save yourselves from hell", or "So that you may guard yourselves against evil." But the point is that one can hope to attain salvation and paradise only when one worships Allah alone, and does not associate anyone else with Him.

Before we proceed, we must clarify a very important doctrinal point. The phrase "so that you may become God-fearing" employs the Arabic particle Valla which indicates an expectation or hope, and is used on an occasion when it is not definite that a certain action or event would necessarily be actualized. Now, if one does really possess 'Iman (faith) and does really believe in Tauhid, one would, in consequence definitely attain salvation and go to Heaven, as Allah Himself has promised. But here the certainty has been expressed in terms of an expectation or hope in order to make man realize that no human action by itself and in itself can bring salvation as a necessary reward. One can attain salvation and go to Heaven only by the grace of Allah alone. The ability to perform good deeds, and 'Iman itself is only a sign of divine grace, not the cause.

The next verse recounts some other qualities of Allah with regard to the act of nurturing, with the difference that while verse 21 spoke of the bounties of Allah pertaining to the human self, verse 22 speaks of those pertaining to man's physical environment.

2) EAT OF WHAT IS LAWFUL & GOOD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ {البقرة/168}

O YE PEOPLE! Eat of that which is lawful and good on the earth, and follow not the footsteps of Shaytan (Satan or The Evil One). Verily, he is to you an open enemy.

Brief Explanationⁱⁱ:

In this verse is an invitation to all mankind to enjoy the good things in life and avoid the harmful ones. This is coupled with a warning against following the suggestions of Satan, who will only advise people to do evil and harmful things and to arrogate to themselves the right to decide what is right and what is not without reference to the Creator. There is also a warning against following others blindly in matters of religion and living one's life, and a denunciation of the worship of any deity other than God Almighty.

Avoiding something permissible on the assumption that doing so will please Allah is a Satanic thought. These instructions show plainly how realistic and practical Islam is, and how genuinely aware of man's nature and needs. The rule is that everything is lawful with the exception of a few things, which are listed in the Quran and Hadith by name.

The surah derides the argument put forward by the Arab idolaters or the Jews, or both, who insist that they will only follow what their forefathers followed: "Even if their forefathers did not use reason at all, and followed no guidance." That is exactly what the Quran condemns. When it comes to defining matters relating to faith, the Quran rejects all authority other than God's, and flatly condemns those who follow blindly inherited traditions and practices. The next verse gives a humiliating image of those blind followers of earlier generations, depicting them as herds of sheep that can hear the shouting and the sounds made by their shepherds but do not understand what those words actually mean. In fact, as the Surah goes on we realize that they are worse.

Meaning of words:

The real meaning of the root word 'halla' in (halalan tayyiban: permissible and good) is 'to open a knot'. In that sense, what has been made halal means that a knot has been opened and the restriction has been removed. The blessed Companion Sahl ibn 'Abdullah R.A. has said: "Salvation depends on three things - eating halal, fulfilling (divine) obligations and following the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ" The word 'tayyib' means 'good' as inclusive of the clean and the pure and covers the twin aspects of being lawful, permissible or halal and being naturally desirable.

The word 'khutuwat' is the plural form of 'khutwah' which is the distance between the two feet when striding. Here the 'khutuwat' of Shaytan means Satanic deeds.

The blessed Companion 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud R.A. said that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: "The son of Adam is influenced by a suggestion from the Satan and a suggestion from the angel. The Satanic suggestion has the effect of bringing forth the expedient gains in evil deeds and thereby opening the avenues of negating the truth, while the angelic suggestion promises reward and success for good deeds and leaves the happy effect of a heart in peace at its attestation of the truth."

3) FOLLOW THE LAW OF EQUALITY

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ {البقرة/179}

And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O YOU [PEOPLE] of understanding, that you may become righteous.

Brief Explanationⁱⁱⁱ:

This verse signifies the importance of just retribution which is considered as a life. It indicates the fact that if right punishment is given (by legitimate government, not individuals or groups), then it would serve as deterrent or negative reinforcement for such a crime to happen in future.

In case of killing, it is also permission for both parties to settle on diyat. This situation would arise when the victim's relatives decide to accept financial compensation instead of insisting on the

execution of the killer in retaliation. Once this is agreed, the victim's relatives are also under an obligation to seek a fair and amicable settlement, while the killer's guardian or representative must, on his part, settle readily and honourably. This serves to clear the air and to remove any ill-feelings or grudges that would have inevitably arisen between the two parties. It would also be conducive to a more friendly and pleasant relationship between the living members of both parties. This provision has been laid down out of God's grace, as a special favour and an act of mercy towards believers.

4) REVERENCE YOUR GUARDIAN-LORD & YOUR MOTHER

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا {النساء/1}

O YE PEOPLE! Fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.

Brief Explanation^{iv}:

This first passage of this Surah An-Nisa begins with this verse which reminds people that they all have one Lord and a single Creator, that they descend from the same origin and belong to one family. It defines the unit of humanity as the individual and makes the family the unit of society. It emphasises the importance of fearing God and fostering ties of kinship in order to build on this basis all the obligations of mutual care and support, as well as compassion within the family and within humanity as a single whole. All the legislation and regulations included in this surah take into account the twin obligations of fearing God and of fostering ties of kinship. In the opening passage starting with verse, the duties and legal provisions concerning orphans are outlined, thus providing protection for those who are normally weak within both the family and society. These provisions define the way in which orphans and their property should be looked after. They also regulate how inheritance takes place within the family and the various shares of different relatives according to a whole range of situations. All this relates to the fundamental principle stated in this opening verse, reminders of which are given at the beginning, middle or end of other verses. The emphasis being on the relationship between these regulations and legal provisions and the One who enacts them, the Supreme Lord.

Meaning of Words:

The word, 'al-arham' in this verse is the plural of rahim. Rahim refers to womb. The womb of the mother is the home of the child until born. Since this womb is the source of blood relationship, the act of maintaining relations in that line is called silatur-rahim in Arabic (literally, umbilical link or bond or relationship). The converse of it, that is, showing carelessness and indifference towards natural linkage based on blood relationship is identified as qat'-al-rahim (literally, umbilical delinkage, meaning cutting off relationship with one's kin).

The noble ahadith have laid great emphasis on bonds of kinship.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: Whoever likes to have his livelihood made plentiful and his age extended for him should maintain good relations with his near of kin. (Mishkat, p. 419)

This hadith tells us about two benefits that issue forth from treating near relations well. The merit of the Hereafter vouchsafed, this fair treatment of one's kin has its benefits in this life as well, that is, it removes straightening's from his livelihood and blesses his age with more good years.

Sayyidna 'Abdullah ibn Salam R.A. says: When the Holy Prophet ﷺ came to Madinah al-Tayyibah and I presented myself before him, the very first words from him which fell into my ears were:

O men, make a practice of greeting each other with salam, and feed people (for the pleasure of Allah), and treat near relations well, and pray by night while people sleep - you will enter Paradise in peace. (Mishkat, p. 108)

There is another narration on the same subject in which the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been reported to have said: Charity to the needy is just charity, while to a near relative it becomes twofold: charity and kinship. (Mishkat, p. 171)

Hence, a simple change in the end-use of charity yields two types of merits.

As opposed to this there is the attitude of cold-shouldering or severing of blood relationships. How stern are the warnings given in hadith reports against this can be imagined from the following two ahadith:

The Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 1. A breaker of (blood) relationships shall not enter Paradise. (Mishkat, p. 419)

2. Mercy shall not descend upon a people among whom there is a breaker of (blood) relationships. (Mishkat, p. 420)

The statement in the last sentence of this verse: (and surely, Allah is watchful over you) motivates human hearts to fulfil rights as and when they are due because Divine watchfulness implies awareness of whatever there is in human hearts - intentions, scruples, motives - everything. Doing things half-heartedly, formally, or for fear of possible embarrassment, without any genuine desire to serve, shall remain acts unacceptable to Allah. Incidentally, from here we find out why Allah should be feared - because He is watchful over everyone, always. As pointed out elsewhere too, this is typical of the usual style of the Holy Quran when it does not introduce laws in sheer cold print like the laws of the governments of this world, but puts them forth in the manner of education, training and affection by not restricting itself to the word of law alone, but by combining it with the grooming of minds and hearts as well.

5) GOD COULD DESTROY YOU AND CREATE ANOTHER RACE

إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَهْلَهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ قَدِيرًا {النساء/133}

If He wills, He can do away with you, O PEOPLE, and bring others [in your place]. And ever is Allah competent to do that.

Brief Explanation:

It is a message for those who think that they are irreplaceable and if they do not do anything nothing can be done for the deen of Allah. If Allah wishes, He can replace those who turn away with other people who would love Allah SWT, His messenger and the noble religion of Islam and Allah SWT will love them.

In Surah Muhammad ﷺ, Allah SWT says: “And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people; then they will not be the likes of you” (Verse 38).

Similarly, in Surah Al-Maidah, verse 53, it is mentioned: “O you who believe! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion (Islam), Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him”. So the effort for the deen of Allah will continue to be made. If we choose to do it, it will be for our own sake and our own benefit in the here-after.

6) BELIEVE IN APOSTLE: IT IS BEST FOR YOU

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {النساء/170}

O YE PEOPLE! the Messenger has come to you with the truth from your Lord, so believe; it is better for you. But if you disbelieve - then indeed, to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth. And ever is Allah Knowing and Wise.

Brief Explanation^v:

This is a universal call to all mankind, to tell them that God’s Messenger ﷺ has come to them with the truth from their Lord. He who believes in him follows the right path. Those who deny him should know that God has no need for any of them and He can overpower them all. By believing, no-one is benefitting Allah in any way, but their own selves. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. He is aware of everything, and He runs all affairs according to His knowledge and wisdom.

This call to all mankind to believe in the last message was preceded by a recital of all the false claims made by people to whom revelations were given at earlier times. This together with the unmasking of the true nature of the Jews and their evil deeds throughout their history. Their inherent obstinacy, even in their attitude towards Moses, their Prophet, leader and saviour, is also exposed. The call is also preceded by an explanation of the nature of this last message and its purpose, both of which require that God sends messengers and sends Muhammad ﷺ to all mankind. Having sent a number of messengers with messages to their own nations, it is only logical that this process should culminate with a final, universal message to all mankind “so that people may have no argument against God, once the messengers had come”. Had this final message not been addressed to all mankind, later generations would have had an argument against God. But the final and universal message of Muhammad ﷺ has stopped any such argument. To deny that a message should come after the Jewish prophets, including or excluding Jesus (peace be upon him), is contrary to God’s justice which ensures that no punishment can be exacted without having first sent a message. As it happened, there was no universal message prior to Islam. Such a universal message was, therefore, inevitable, to ensure God’s justice and mercy to mankind. This proves God’s description of His

Messenger: "We have only sent you as mercy to mankind." (21: 107) He is, indeed, a manifestation of God's mercy in this life and in the life to come, as appears clearly from this Quranic statement.

7) A CONVINCING PROOF HATH COME TO YOU

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُّبِينًا {النساء/174}

O YE PEOPLE! There has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.

Brief Explanation^{vi}:

This ayah tells people that this final message brings its own proof from God and that it is a glorious light which removes all doubt. Those who accept its guidance will receive God's mercy and His grace. They will find themselves guided by this light along a straight path.

The Divine mark is apparent in the Quran which distinguishes it from what human beings say or write in both construction and message. This is so clear that it is sometimes acknowledged, quite remarkably, by people who do not understand Arabic at all.

As for those who know this language and understand its style and can appreciate its finer expressions and methods of construction, theirs was a special case when they were presented with the Quran by Muhammad ﷺ, God's Messenger. We know the famous story of al-Akhnas ibn Sharīq, Abū Sufyān and Abū Jahl, three of the fiercest opponents of Islam, when they sought to listen to the Quran secretly under the cover of darkness. They came only to listen to the Quran, when the Quraysh tribe had decided not to listen to anything the Prophet said. Nevertheless, these Quraysh leaders came out individually, none knowing anything about what the other two were doing, and none realising that he had companions doing the same thing as he. They sat there, outside the place where the Prophet and his few followers were reading the Quran, to listen to it. At dawn, they went back, hoping to arrive home before anyone could see them. But they met on the road and each then blamed the others. They pledged to one another that they would never do it again. However, all three did the same thing for three consecutive nights, before they made a solemn pledge never to repeat their deed. This is only one among many similar stories. People who appreciate fine style can understand the unique nature of the Quran and its captivating effect on people and the clear proof it provides of the truthfulness of its message.

We cannot speak in detail here on the subject matter of the Quran, the concept of life it presents, its approach to human life and the system it lays down. In each of these, we have a clear proof of its origin and that it can never be the word of man. It carries the mark of its author, God, the Glorious.

Quran is a light which lays bare the very nature of things, and defines the parting of the ways of truth and falsehood within man himself and in human life altogether. When it is properly appreciated, this light gives man the ability to see himself and everything around him clearly, without anything covering its nature or presenting itself in a false light or position. Everything then becomes clear and simple so that man wonders how he could not see it so clearly and simply before he was able to benefit by the light of the Quran. When man allows his soul to be guided by the Quran and receives from it its values and standards, he feels that he has acquired a new element, one which allows him

to see all matters with perfect ease and clarity. Many things that used to worry him now fall into place, all appearing as part of a general system, which is simple, natural and clear. We can dwell at great length on this expression: "and We have sent down to you a glorious light". But whatever we say, we will never be able to describe its message in our own words and we cannot impart its significance to anyone who has not experienced it. Such concepts can only be appreciated by personal experience.

We accordingly encourage all readers to begin their own journey to understand this noble book and use it as a compass to guide their lives.

8) THE LIFE OF THIS WORLD IS DECEIVING YOU

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمُ آيَاتِي وَيُنذِرُونَكُمْ لِقَاءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا قَالُوا شَهِدْنَا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِنَا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ {الأنعام/130}

O YE ASSEMBLY OF JINNS & MEN! Did there not come to you messengers from among you, relating to you My verses and warning you of the meeting of this Day of yours?" They will say, "We bear witness against ourselves"; and the worldly life had deluded them, and they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers.

Brief explanation^{vii}:

The previous passage of the Surah contained a full discussion of the situation of those whose hearts God opens up to receive the message of surrender to Him. They remain conscious of God and continue to watch Him in all their actions, move towards a life of peace, assured that they will have the patronage of their Lord. As it is customary in the Quran for contrasting scenes of the Day of Judgement to be portrayed, we now have a sketch showing the lot of the evil ones among humans and jinn. These spend their lives inspiring one another with deceptive falsehood, supporting one another in their hostility to every prophet and messenger pointing out to each other what arguments to use with the believers in order to raise doubts in their minds about what God has made lawful and what He has forbidden. All this is portrayed in a very vivid sketch, characterized by dialogue, confession and reproach.

Full of life, the scene is shown first to be one of the future, when all creation will be gathered before God. Yet it soon becomes a scene of the present, held in front of the eyes of every listener. This is achieved by the omission of one Arabic word which means in English, "He will say", included in the translation between brackets for clarity. The omission of this phrase, expressed in a single Arabic word, brings the whole scene right into the present so as not to speak of something to be awaited in future but of something that is taking place now. This method is characteristic of the inimitable style of the Quran. The question here is not meant to seek information but to provide it and record the facts as they took place. God who is infinite in His Glory knows what their situation in this life was. Their answer to this question is simply an acknowledgement on their part that they deserve the punishment of the hereafter. This question is addressed to the jinn as well as humans. Does this mean that God has sent messengers to the jinn from among themselves, in the same way as He sent messengers to human beings? God alone knows the nature of this species of His creation, the jinn, who remain unknown to us human beings. However, the Quranic statement may be interpreted to

mean that the jinn have been able to listen to the revelations sent down to God's Messenger and to convey it to their people, warning them against continuing in their disbelief.

According to *Tafsir Tanvir al Miqbas Min Tafsir Ibn Abbas*, among the jinn, the nine who came to the Prophet ﷺ and then went back to their people to deliver the message. It is also said that the jinn had a prophet of their own called Joseph, (who recounted) recited commands of Allah to them and warned about the consequences of their wrong-doings.

Those of the jinn and humans who are addressed in this way recognize that the question is not meant to solicit information but to record it and to add an element of reproach for their attitude. Therefore, they make a full confession and state that they deserve the punishment they are bound to receive: "They will reply: 'We bear witness against ourselves'".

The life of this world has beguiled us. It distraction is so much that we get lost in it not realizing the real purpose behind our creation. On the day of judgement when all what we have done would be in front of humans and jinns and they will not have anywhere to escape, they will bear witness against themselves. On the Day of Judgement, they testify against themselves because they realize that denial is of no use. Can there be any situation more miserable than to find oneself in a fix where one cannot say in one's own defence even a word of denial, let alone a word of justification?

Let us reflect for a moment on the remarkable Quranic style which paints future events so that we can visualise them now, as if they were taking place in front of our very eyes. The Quran is revealed so that it is read to people in this life, in their own surroundings. But it portrays the scenes of the life to come as if they are taking place now, while scenes of this life belong to an era which has long since passed. In this way, we forget that the Day of Judgement is still to come. We feel that it is here, now. This is only made possible by the remarkable style of the Quran:

When the scene is complete, the address is made to God's Messenger ﷺ, his followers and to mankind in general. The address includes a comment on the judgement made against evil human beings and jinn and the fact that such a great multitude are condemned to the fire. Their fate is sealed only after they have testified against themselves that they continued to disbelieve despite receiving messengers who related to them God's revelations and warned them against what awaited them of God's punishment if they continued to reject the faith.

Messages and signs are all around us. If we don't take right direction now, we will be left with nothing but regret.

9) THE RAIMENT IS TO COVER SHAME & ADORNMENT

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُؤَارِي سَوْآتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ {الأعراف/26}

O CHILDREN OF ADAM, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best. That is from the signs of Allah that perhaps they will remember.

Brief Explanation^{viii}:

By addressing as 'children of Adam' and hence referring to an important aspect of Adam and Eve's story, the attention of the people was drawn to the evil influence of Satan upon their lives. Under Satan's influence, many people in past begun to see dress merely as a shield of protection against the inclemencies of the weather and as a means of adornment. Many people think of it the same way in present times as well. The basic purpose of dress, however, is to cover the private parts of the body – something which among many has receded into the background. It is astonishing to note that what was applicable at the time of revelation is applicable presently as well. In the era of Jahilliyah, people had no inhibition about the immodest exposure of the private parts of their body in public. To publicly take a bath absolutely naked, to attend to the call of nature on thoroughfares, were the order of the day. To crown it all, in the course of Pilgrimage they used to circumambulate around the Ka'bah in stark nakedness. Women even surpassed men in immodesty. In their view, the performance of religious rites in complete nudity was an act of religious merit.

Immodesty, however, was not an exclusive characteristic of the people of pre-Islamic Arabia. Many nations indulged in it in the past, and many nations continue to indulge in it even now. Hence the message embodied in these verses is not directed just to the people of Arabia. It is rather directed to all men and women of present age and ages to come. Mankind, which is the progeny of Adam, is warned against this particular aspect of Satanic influence on their lives. Satan tried to trick our father Adam and is continuing with its efforts to trick and deceive his sons and daughters. When men show indifference to God's Guidance and turn away from the Message of the Prophets, they virtually place themselves at the mercy of Satan. For it is Satan who makes them abandon way's that are consistent with true human nature and who leads them to immodesty in the same way he did with Adam and Eve. Were man to reflect on this, it would become quite evident that when he is deprived of the guidance of the Prophets, he cannot even appreciate, let alone fulfil, the primary requirements of his true nature.

Allah SWT says in next verse:

Children of Adam! Let not Satan deceive you in the manner he deceived your parents out of Paradise, pulling off from them their clothing to reveal to them their shame. He and his host surely see you from whence you do not see them. We have made satans the guardians of those who do not believe.

So, we may not realize and see our enemy, Satan, but he is there to deceive us, like our forefathers. It is Satan's loaded tool to infuse immodesty. And if we look around us testimonial to this effort is evident. Pornography, a multi-trillion dollar industry, is accessible by anyone, anytime and from anywhere. It has become one of the biggest addiction of our time and a seed that leads to many other evils including ruined marriages, zina and other serious acts of shame.

10) FOLLOW THE APOSTLES& MEND YOUR LIVES

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ إِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُصُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي فَمَنِ اتَّقَى وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ {الأعراف/35}

O CHILDREN OF ADAM, if there come to you messengers from among you relating to you My verses, then whoever fears Allah and reforms - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.

Brief explanation^{ix}:

Before we were sent to live our present life, a pledge was taken from every human being in the world of spirits. This pledge envisaged that they would, when the prophets of Allah come to them with Divine guidance and injunctions, listen to them in earnest and act accordingly. They were also told that those who abide by the pledge and fulfil what is entails, will have their salvation from sorrows and deserve eternal peace and comfort. And conversely, those who belie prophets or rebel against injunction they bring shall have the eternal punishment of hellfire waiting for them. The verses after this verse deal with how various groups started to behave after coming to this world forgetting the promise they made before coming here. Those who have forgotten their promise or have chosen not to live by it find it about it on the day of judgement when nothing would be able to hide their shame and even their own body parts will testify what they used to do in this world.

11) BELIEVE IN GOD & FOLLOW HIS PROPHET

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ {الأعراف/158}

Say, [O Muhammad], "O MANKIND, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, [from Him] to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. There is no deity except Him; He gives life and causes death." So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him that you may be guided.

Brief Explanation^x:

In these ayah's, Allah SWT is addressing His messenger to let mankind know that the message given to him is for all of humanity and all the people, including those towards whom prophets were sent previously. This is, then, the final, universal message that is not confined to a particular community, area or generation. Earlier messages were limited to a certain community or a certain period of time which extended until the appearance of a new messenger. Every new message incorporated certain modifications of the divine law that took into account human progress. The final message is complete and perfect in essence leaving room for flexibility in the implementation of its details as there is no other prophet to come after the final prophet. It is meant for all mankind, and there will be no subsequent local messages for any particular community or generation. It responds to basic human nature, which means that it is suitable for all mankind. Hence, it was conveyed by the unlettered Prophet whose nature remained pure, refined only by the care he received from God. Hence, the Prophet's pure nature conveyed the naturally pure message, addressing the very nature that is common to all mankind: "Say: 'Mankind, I am indeed Gods Messenger to you all.'"

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is a Messenger to all mankind from Allah – Lord of all the world who is the Sovereign of the whole universe to which all mankind belong. He is the only God to whom everything in the universe submits. The clearest manifestation of His Godhead and His power is seen in the fact that He alone grants life and causes death. His religion, which His Messenger conveys to mankind, is the one that deserves to be accepted by all humanity because it is the religion that makes people fully aware of the true nature of their Lord. Thus, their submission to Him is an enlightened one, entailing complete obedience to God's Messenger.

This final address makes some important, though subtle, points which should be outlined. To start with, this address implies an order to believe in God and His Messenger. This is the same implication as the declaration that there is no deity other than God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger. This is certainly the essence of faith. This order is preceded by an outline of God's essential attributes: "It is to Him that sovereignty over the heavens and the earth belongs. There is no deity other than Him. He alone grants life and causes death." Hence, it is an order to believe in God, having learnt His true and essential attributes, and learnt that this message applies to all mankind.

It also implies that the unlettered Prophet (peace be upon him) believes in God and His word. While this goes without saying, drawing attention to it here is quite important. Before a person advocates a certain cause, he himself must believe in it and must have its essentials clear in his mind so that he knows the true nature of what he advocates. Hence, the Prophet sent as God's Messenger to all mankind is described as one "who believes in God and His words." (Verse 158) This is exactly what he calls on people to believe.

The address also refers to the practical requirements of the faith which the Prophet calls on people to accept. When they have accepted faith, they are required to abide by its law and to follow its teachings. This is stated clearly in God's own words: "And follow him, so that you may be rightly guided." (Verse 158) There is simply no way that people can benefit by the guidance given to them through God's Messenger unless they follow in practice what that Messenger says. It is not sufficient that they should believe in it, unless that belief is endorsed by practice. This is the essence of Islam. This faith of Islam makes its own nature clear at every occasion. It is not simply a set of beliefs that find their way into people's minds and hearts. Nor is it merely a set of rituals that have to be observed. It means the complete adherence in practice to everything that God's Messenger has conveyed to us as part of his message. The Prophet ﷺ has not confined himself to telling people to believe in God and His Messenger, or merely to do the various aspects of worship, but he has also conveyed to them, in word and deed, correct way to live each and every aspect of our lives.

There is no way that people can have full guidance unless they follow the Prophet in all these aspects, which, together, form the religion God has given them. This religion of Islam has no version other than that indicated by the command to believe in God and His Messenger, coupled with this order: "And follow him, so that you may be rightly guided." Had the Islamic faith been merely a matter of beliefs only, it would have been sufficient to say: "Believe, then, in God and His Messenger." But God has followed this by the order to follow the Prophet in everything that he has given us.

Significance of word 'Ummi' (Un-lettered) prophet in this verse:

Imam Ibn Al Kathir explains the word 'Ummi' with following explanation:

"Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): 'Neither did you (O Muhammad) read any book before it (this Qur'aan), nor did you write any book (whatsoever) with your right hand . . .' i.e., 'you (O Muhammad) lived among your people for a while before you brought this Qur'aan to them, and you never read any book or were able to write anything. Everyone among your people and others knows that you are an unlettered man, who does not read or write.' This is how he was described in the previous Books as Allaah said (interpretation of the meaning): 'Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write whom they find written with them in the Tawraat and the

Injeel, - he commands them for al-Ma'roof (i.e., Islamic monotheism and all that Islaam has ordained); and forbids them from al-Munkar (i.e., disbelief, polytheism of all kinds, and all that Islaam has forbidden) . . .' [al-A'raaf 7:157].

This also nullifies the doubts spread by orientalists who say that Prophet ﷺ could have referred to previous books to come up with Quran. He could not read or write so he could not have done that. There were very few people in Hijaz at that time who could write.

Interesting fact is that as Quran mentions, prophecy about Prophet Muhammad being un-lettered is still present in bible despite countless modifications in it by its followers over the centuries. It is mentioned in the book of Isaiah chapter 29 verse 12:

"And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." When Archangel Gabrail commanded Muhammad (pbuh) by saying Iqra - "Read", he replied, "I am not learned".

Al-Mawardi says that "there are three key aspects related to Prophet ﷺ being al-Ummi:

(i) his message fulfilled the foretelling of the previous Prophets;

(ii) this made him similar to and closer to other Prophets;

(iii) this would eliminate all suspicion that he had learned the message he preached from books and writings that he had read."

According to Imam al-Qurtubi, all of this is evidence of the miraculous nature and truth of his Prophet-hood. Consider this in our time and the power of this message. Imagine Prophet Muhammad ﷺ telling us about the specific duties of female bees at the time where there were no microscopes and people could never figure out which bee is male and which is female. Imagine a prophet who never left the desert telling people about dynamics of sea waves. Imagine the prophet telling us about the mountains being pegged into earth (i.e. having gone into the earth not just staying on top) without any excavations in his time. From where can all this come. It could only be from God through His pure messenger.

12) IT IS HEALING FOR YOUR HEART, GUIDANCE & A MERCY

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاء لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ {يونس/57}

O YE PEOPLE! There has come to you an instruction from your Rabb, a cure for whatever (disease) is in your hearts, and guidance and grace unto all who believe.

Brief Explanation^{xi}:

"That He may make what is thrown in by Satan a trial for those in whose hearts is a disease and whose hearts are hardened." [Surah al-Hajj (22) : 53]

Disease of the heart is a type of degeneration that occurs in it, causing failure in its perception and desires. So with respect to its perception, it falls into doubts upon doubts until it cannot see the truth

or it perceives the truth incorrectly. Its desires are degenerated by its hating the truth which would be of benefit to it, and loving the falsehood that would cause it harm. It also related to lust and desire to commit fornication, which may be considered and as in the case of the verse,

“...Lest he in whose heart is a disease be moved with desire.” [Surah at-Ahzab (33) : 32]

The sick person is harmed by things that the healthy person is not, so slight heat, cold, exertion or other such things will harm him due to his inability to endure them in his weakened state. Sickness, in general, weakens the one afflicted by making his endurance weak and unable to sustain what he would have been able to sustain in a strong state. So a healthy state is preserved by remaining healthy and is removed by the opposite, and the sickness is made more severe by the presence of conditions similar to those that led to the sickness in the first place and removed by the opposite. Therefore, if a sick person is afflicted by something similar to that which led him to being sick in the first place, then he increases in illness and his endurance becomes weaker, until maybe he dies. But if he is affected by something that will increase his strength and weaken the illness then the opposite will occur.

The disease of the heart is a pain that occurs in the heart such as the anger felt towards an opponent who overcomes you, for this hurts the heart.

Allah, the Exalted said,

“...and heal the breast of a believing people and removes the anger of their hearts...” [Surah Tawbah (9) : 14-15]

So the healing for them was by removing the suffering that had occurred in their hearts.

Likewise doubt and ignorance cause pain to the heart. The Prophet (Saw) said,

“Could they not have asked if they did not know? Indeed the cure for ignorance is to ask”.

And the one who has doubt in something he has taken on board, causes harm to his heart until he attains knowledge and certainty. Hence it is said to a scholar when he answers in a way that clarifies the truth: ‘you have healed me with the answer.’

If sickness of hearts doesn’t cure, hearts can become spiritually dead as well. Its life, death, sickness and the cure is of much greater significance than the life, death, sickness and cure of the our physical body.

From explanation above, we understand that heart becomes sick when presented with doubts and desires, and the sickness becomes more acute. If wisdom and goodly exhortation occur then these are routes to its correction and cure.

The Quran is a cure for that which is within the heart, and for the one who has the sickness of doubt and desire in his heart, for it contains clear proofs that distinguish the truth from falsehood, and remove the sickness of false doubts to leave certain knowledge, correct perception and understanding such that the heart sees things in accordance to their reality. It contains wisdom, goodly exhortations both encouraging good and deterring from evil, and stories which contain

lessons that necessarily lead to the correction of the heart by making the heart desire what is good for it and detest what is harmful to it. Hence the heart is left desiring what will give it guidance and hating what will deceive and misguide it.

The Quran removes all the sicknesses that invoke false desires until the heart becomes pure and therefore its desires become pure and it returns to the natural state (fitrah) that it was created in, just as the body returns to the natural state upon being treated. The heart will be nurtured with faith and the Quran such that it will become strong – for indeed the purification of the heart is like the growing of the body.

Allah, the Most High, said,

“And We reveal of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy for the believers...” [Surah Isra’ (17) : 82]

“It is guidance and a healing for those who believe.” [Surah Fussilat (41) : 44]

13) SHAKE OFF YOUR DOUBT TO RELIGION

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي شَكٍّ مِّن دِينِي فَلَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِينَ تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِن أَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ الَّذِي يَتَوَفَّاكُم وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ {يونس/104}

Tell them: O YE PEOPLE! If you are still in doubt concerning my religion, know that I do not serve those whom you serve beside Allah. I only serve Allah Who will take your souls (at death): I am commanded to be (in the ranks) of the Believers.

Brief Explanation^{xii}:

This verse asks prophet Muhammad ﷺ to let the mankind know that ‘I worship only that One, who has full power over your life: He has complete authority and power to let you live as long as He wills and cause you to die at any moment He wills. That is why I am fully convinced that I should submit and surrender, worship, serve and obey Him alone’.

Now let us consider why of all His characteristics, this quality of Allah was specifically cited here. This was to bring home to the people of Makkah that the doctrine of shirk (associating others with Allah in their power and stature) was absolutely false. For they also believed (and all the mushriks have always believed) that death is entirely in the hands of Allah, the Lord of the universe, and none else has any power over it; so much so that they confessed that even those beings, whom they believed to be partners with God in other qualities and powers of, His, could not avert death even from themselves. Thus the mention of this quality of Allah along with the statement of the doctrine of Tauhid (Unity of God) has been made to serve as a proof of that creed. That is, I serve only Him for He alone has the full power over life and death. Why should, then, I serve others who have no power at all over their own lives and deaths, not to mention the lives and deaths of others? The eloquence and force of the statement has been enhanced manifold by saying, “Who gives you death” instead of “Who gives me death”. For this contains the statement of the doctrine, its proof and invitation to it, all the three combined in one concise sentence. Had it been said, “I serve that one Who gives me death” then it would have implied, “I alone should serve Him.” But by saying, “Who gives you death”

the implication is: It is not only I, who should serve Him, but you also should serve Him. For it is absolutely wrong to serve any other than Allah, Who alone has such powers.

14) FOLLOW THE TRUTH FOR YOUR OWN SOULS

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا وَمَا أَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيلٍ
{يونس/108}

Say: "O YE PEOPLE! The truth has come to you from your Lord. Whoever chooses to follow the true guidance does so for his own good; and whoever chooses to go astray, does so at his own peril. I am not responsible for your conduct.'

Brief Explanation^{xiii}:

It is the final, decisive word which makes it clear that everyone chooses his or her way as they please after the truth has been given to all by their Lord. Hence, "whoever chooses to follow the true guidance, does so for his own good; and whoever chooses to go astray, does so at his own peril." (Verse 108) The Prophet is not required to force people to follow divine guidance. He only conveys to them his message and leaves them to choose freely, making it clear that everyone will bear the results of his or her choice.

15) FEAR YOUR LORD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ {الحج/1}

O YE PEOPLE!

Fear your Lord, for the convulsion of the hour (of judgement) will be a thing terrible!

Brief Explanation^{xiv}:

According to the early commentators, this earthquake will be a prelude to Resurrection. This will probably take place when the earth will begin to rotate in the reverse order, and the sun will rise in the west. In a lengthy tradition reported by Ibn Jarir, Tabarani and Ibn Abi Hatim from Abu Hurairah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) has stated that when the first Trumpet will be blown, there will be a general confusion. At the second all people will die and at the third they will be brought back to life and presented before Allah. At the first blowing of the Trumpet, the earth will begin to rock like a boat which is beaten about by huge waves, or like a hanging lamp which is moved from side to side by a strong wind.

This condition has been depicted in the Quran at several other places. For instance (Surah Al-Waqiah, Ayat 6); (Surah Al-Haqqah, Ayats 13-14); (Surah Al-Muzzammil, Ayats 14,17-18); (Surah An-Naziat, Ayats 6-9) and (Surah Al-Zalzalah, Ayats 1-3).

16) SHAKE OFF YOUR DOUBT TO RESURRECTION

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّنَ الْبُعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن تُّرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَنُقَرُّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِنَبْلُوَكُمْ أَشَدَّكُمْ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَّن يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِن بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا وَنَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ {الحج/5}

O YE PEOPLE! If you should be in doubt about the Resurrection, then [consider that] indeed, We created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot, and then from a lump of flesh, formed and unformed - that We may show you. And We settle in the wombs whom We will for a specified term, then We bring you out as a child, and then [We develop you] that you may reach your [time of] maturity. And among you is he who is taken in [early] death, and among you is he who is returned to the most decrepit [old] age so that he knows, after [once having] knowledge, nothing. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and swells and grows [something] of every beautiful kind.

Brief Explanation^{xv}:

Resurrection is a return to a life that has been in existence. Thus, by human standards, it is easier than the origination of life in the first place, although, by God's standards, the notion of easier or more difficult does not arise. To Him, initiating something out of nothing and restoring a life that had ended are the same. Both are the result of His will: "When He wills a thing to be, He only says to it, 'Be'— and it is." (36: 82) But the Quran addresses people according to their own standards, rational thinking and understanding. It directs their hearts to reflect on what they see happening at every moment in their lives. If only they would reflect on it carefully, they would realize that it is miraculous. But to appreciate it as such, they need to look at it with an open heart and a reflective mind. Alas! They rarely ever do so.

Let them ask themselves: what are these people all around them? What are they made of? Where have they come from? What were they before they took this shape and form? And what stages have they gone through? "We have created you out of dust¹." Man is a son of the earth. He originated, took form and lived out of its dust. Not a single element does man have in his constitution but has its parallel in the elements present in mother earth. The only exception is that gentle secret God placed in him when He breathed of His soul into—man, thus bringing about the great difference between man and those elements constituting dust. The fact remains, however, that man is closely related to dust both in his constitution and his food. All tangible elements in man are from the dust of the earth. Nevertheless, the gap is great between dust and man. The basic atoms that are present in dust are far removed from this highly complex creation that acts on his own behest and responds to others. The human creature is influenced by different factors in his surroundings and similarly influences others. His feet are placed on earth, but his soul and heart can fly to heaven. His mind floats to realms beyond that of the physical world that includes the dust from which he was first created.

It is a great divide separating the first status and the last. It points to the power that can bring about the resurrection, having brought about the initial creation. Then out of a gamete, then out of a clinging cell mass, then out of an organized and unorganized embryo, so that We might make things

¹ Recent scientific studies have found origins of life from clay (Nature World News, 2013; Page, 2013; Science Daily, 2013).

clear to you. We cause to rest in the [mothers] wombs whatever We please for an appointed term, and then We bring you forth as infants.

Again the gulf between the primitive, idle elements found in dust and the gamete, a single living cell, is great indeed. It enfolds the great secret of life about which human beings know only a very little, despite the passage of millions of years in which countless numbers of idle elements have been transformed into living cells in a continuous process that never stops. It is a secret that we can only observe and record, without ever being able to initiate, no matter how ambitious we may be. And then there are other secrets, like that of the transformation of the gamete into a clinging cell mass, and the transformation of this cell mass into an embryo which is then transformed into a human being.

What is this gamete, then? It begins with man's semen, a single drop of which contains many thousands of sperms. Yet only one of these countless sperms, or gametes, is needed to fertilize the woman's egg, which is then implanted in the uterus. In this little fertilized egg, implanted in the uterus, are stored, by God's will and power, all the unique characteristics of the human being yet to be born: his physical appearance including his height, stature, beauty, strength and health status as well as his mental and psychological characteristics, including his tendencies, natural likes and dislikes, abilities and talents. Who can imagine that all this is stored in this little speck clinging to the uterus which, in time, becomes such a complex being? Yet every individual in this race is extremely different from all other individuals, to the extent that no two individuals are ever identical over any period of time.

Then this clinging cell mass is transformed into an embryo which at first is without shape or distinction. Subsequently a transformation overtakes it to give it a form that begins with a skeleton that is later fleshed up. Alternatively, the uterus may reject it if God wills not to let it complete its cycle. "So that We might make things clear to you." This clause indicates that there is a pause between the embryonic stage and the child. This clause refers to the numerous signs of God's limitless power, and the reference coincides with the appearance of organs in the embryo.

The verse moves on to refer to the next stage in the development of the foetus: "We cause to rest in the [mothers] wombs whatever We please for an appointed term." Whatever God wills to complete its cycle will rest in its mother's womb until its time of birth. "Then We bring you forth as infants." Again we say, what a wide gulf separating the first stage and this final one!

In terms of time, it is normally nine months, but in terms of the difference between the nature of the gamete and the nature of the child, it is far greater than that. The gamete cannot be seen by the naked eye, while the child is a highly complex and sophisticated creation, with numerous organs and systems, features, qualities, talents, tendencies and desires. An intelligent mind can only appreciate this great divide after it has humbly reflected, time and again, on the great power behind creation.

The surah continues with a new cycle that starts with the newborn child, after it has left its hiding place where it went through a series of great miracles, away from all beholders. Then it is time for a new phase, so that "you may grow up and attain your prime." You will attain your full growth: physically, mentally and psychologically. The gulf between a newborn child and an adult, in their respective characteristics, is much wider than the time separating one from the other. This gulf,

however, is bridged by God's will who has given the little infant all the characteristics of a mature adult. What is more is that He has given this child a great variety of talents and potentialities that may rise to the surface at their appropriate times. It is the same divine will that gives the zygote, as it is implanted in the uterus, all the qualities of a human child. Yet that fertilized egg is the product of worthless fluid.

"Some of you die young, and some live on to abject old age when all that they once knew they know no more." (Verse 5) The one who dies young meets at an early stage the end of every living thing. As for the ones who live to old age, they provide an important case for reflection. Although each one was a person of knowledge, maturity and wisdom, now they are again children in their feelings, reactions, awareness, knowledge, dealings and management. Like a child, one little thing may give them great pleasure, and another may cause them to cry. Their memory retains very little and retrieves very little. And like a child, they take events individually, unable to relate them to one another or to look ahead to the conclusion to which they lead. They simply forget the beginning before they reach the end. It is like God says: "When all that they once knew they know no more." They lose the knowledge that once was a source of pride to them, leading them even to argue about God, His existence and His attributes. Now all such knowledge disappears from their minds and consciousness.

The verse then moves on to portray other scenes of creation and living creatures on earth and in the world of plants. "You can see the earth dry and barren; and [suddenly,] when We send down water upon it, it stirs and swells and puts forth every kind of radiant bloom." The state of being 'dry and barren', which is expressed in the Arabic text with one word, *hāmīdah*, is a state in between life and death. This is how the earth is when it is starved of water, the basic ingredient for life and the living. Thus, when rain water is poured over it, 'it stirs and swells.' This is a remarkable movement which the Qur'ān recorded many centuries before human science. When soil is very dry and then rain falls over it, it makes a movement like shaking or stirring. It absorbs the water and swells. It is then full of life, bringing forth blooming vegetation that radiates pleasure. Is there anything more pleasing to the eye than seeing life bloom in an area that has long remained barren?

Here we see how the Quran speaks of a bond between all living creatures, citing them all as one of God's numerous signs. This is a remarkable reference to the fact that the essence of life is one in all the living, and to the unity of the will that brings life into being on earth, as in plants, animals and man.

17) YE ARE WARNED

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا أَنَا لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ {الحج/49}

SAY: "O YE PEOPLE! I am (sent) to you only to give a clear warning".

Brief Explanation^{xvi}:

Role of Prophet ﷺ is to convey the clear message. It is up to people to accept this message or not. In either case, they would face the consequences of their actions themselves.

In this verse the Prophet's task is clearly stated as one of giving people a clear and plain warning, that leaves no room for ambiguity. This fits the immediate situation of stubborn rejection of God's message that makes people hasten their own doom. The final destiny is clearly stated. Those who believe and put their faith into practice, so as to 'do righteous deeds' will have their reward which consists of forgiveness by their Lord of all sins that they may have committed or duties they may have omitted to do. Such forgiveness is coupled with 'a most excellent sustenance' that they receive with dignity.

Those who endeavour to stop God's revelations from addressing people's hearts, and God's laws from being implemented in their life, will be the ones to suffer in the blazing fire. The expression the Surah uses makes them the owners of this fire, which is in stark contrast with the excellent sustenance the believers receive. God always protects His message from the wicked designs of unbelievers who try to prevent its implementation. Similarly, He protects it from Satan's scheming and his attempts to manoeuvre his way into the hopes entertained by God's messengers who are, after all, human. Although God's messengers are given immunity from Satan, their human nature makes them hope that their efforts in advocating divine faith will be enough to remove all impediments and ensure a speedy victory. Satan tries to exploit these hopes in order to force the message out of its fundamental principles and proper methods. But God renders all Satan's schemes futile, preserves His message, making its principles and values clear, perfects His revelations and removes all doubt that may surround its values and method of action.

18) YE SHOULD CALL ONLY GOD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضَرْبَ مَثَلٍ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعُوا لَهُ وَإِنْ يَسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ {الحج/73}

O YE PEOPLE! An example is presented, so listen to it. Indeed, those you invoke besides Allah will never create [as much as] a fly, even if they gathered together for that purpose. And if the fly should steal away from them a [tiny] thing, they could not recover it from him. Weak are the pursuer and pursued.

Brief Explanation^{xvii}:

Quran uses various literary and psychological methods to effectively convey its noble message and to educate the hearts and minds of its listeners. One of these methods is the use of parables.

Allah SWT mentions about the use of parables in Quran:

Indeed, We have offered in this Quran every evidence and lesson by way of parables and examples for people so that they may think and take heed (Zumar 39:27)

So God propounds parables for human beings, that they may reflect on them and infer the necessary lessons. (Ibrahim 14:25)

Parables help people understand abstract concepts by alluding to shared experiences and by allowing the readers to emphasize with participants or to feel as if they are direct observers in these experiences.

The address is in current verse through used parable is universal, it includes everyone anywhere in the world, and the declaration is loud and clear: "Mankind!" When people have been gathered to listen, they are told that they are about to be given a statement of a general principle, not a particular case applicable on a certain occasion. "An aphorism is set forth; hearken, then, to it." It is a statement of fact that applies in all situations: "Those beings whom you invoke instead of God cannot create a fly, even though they were to join all their forces to that end." All false deities, whether they be idols and statues, human beings, traditions and values, to whom you appeal for support and with whom you seek to achieve victory and high esteem, are incapable of creating a fly, even if they muster all their forces, utilize all their knowledge and channel all their resources into one supreme effort. Indeed, the creation of a mere fly, that small and abject creature, defies all the harnessed powers of such false gods.

Creating a fly is just as impossible, for anyone or thing other than God, as creating a camel or an elephant, because the fly also demonstrates the great secret of life. Hence, it is placed on the same level as camels and elephants, with regard to its miraculous creation. The Quranic aphorism, however, cites the case of a little, insignificant fly in order to generate a more profound feeling of powerlessness, without compromising the underlying principle.

The Surah adds another dimension in describing their powerlessness: "If a fly robs them of anything, they cannot rescue it from him!" False deities, be they idols or humans, cannot retrieve anything from a fly when it robs them of it. Flies can rob people of that which is precious indeed. At the same time, a fly carries agents of some very serious diseases, such as tuberculosis, typhoid, dysentery and conjunctivitis. It can deprive a person of his eyes or other organs, or indeed deprive him of his life. A weak and contemptible fly can rob a human being of what he can never retrieve.

Here again we note how the Quranic style uses facts in the most effective way. Had the text referred to lions and similar wild animals adding that men cannot rescue anything such animals rob them of, it would have generated an air of strength and force, rather than weakness. Besides, the most powerful animals cannot rob man of anything greater than what a fly can rob him of.

This powerful image stating a clear aphorism concludes with a simple comment: "Weak indeed is the seeker, and weak the sought!" This comment further emphasizes the effects generated by the verse as a whole. At this moment when we realize how weak and contemptible these false deities are, the Surah denounces the unbelievers for their faulty concept of God, clearly stating God's power: "No true understanding of God have they. God is certainly Most Powerful, Almighty." How could they understand Him as He really is when they associate with Him such powerless deities that cannot even create a fly? What understanding of God have they, when they see His highly sophisticated creation and yet they consider as equal to Him beings that cannot create even a little fly? They even invoke such powerless creatures which cannot retrieve anything flies take away from them, instead of invoking God. So, how can it be claimed that they have a proper concept of God? This is a damning comment at a point which should arouse feelings of submission to God alone.

19) THOU ART EVER TOILING ON TOWARDS THY LORD

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمَلَأَ قِيَهُ {الإنشفاق/6}

O YE PEOPLE! Surely you are exerting yourself to your Lord with great exertion, then you will be meeting Him.

Brief Explanation^{xviii}:

Many think that all the efforts and endeavours in the world are confined to worldly life and motivated by worldly desires, yet the truth is that we are all moving, consciously or unconsciously, towards our Lord and we ultimately have to appear before Him in any case with all that we done in this world.

Mankind is addressed in this verse and shown a road that if it were to think about it carefully, and use its sense and intelligence, it could exert its efforts in the right direction that will ensure for it welfare, well-being and safety in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. First, it has been pointed out that man, whether he is good or bad, believer or non-believer, has the natural tendency to exert himself in order to achieve his goal. A good-natured person will work hard and adopt lawful means to acquire his livelihood and necessities of life. A bad person cannot obtain his needs and objective without working hard. Thieves, robbers, rogues, cheats and looters apply their minds and exert their physical strength in order to achieve their objective. Secondly, it has been pointed out that if the intelligent man were to think carefully, all his movements and pauses are stations of a long journey he is going through, though unconsciously. This journey will end at his presence before Allah, that is, at death. This is stated in the phrase *ila rabbika* 'to your Lord'. This is a statement of reality which none can deny. All efforts, [good or bad], must end with death. The third point is that after death, in the presence of his Lord, he will have to give an account of his movements and deeds, and of his efforts. This is rationally necessary and justified, so that the consequences of good and bad may be separately known, because such distinction is not known in this life. A good person may work hard for a month or so in order to obtain his livelihood and necessities of life, but thieves and looters may obtain them overnight. If there is no time of reckoning or punishment, both of them [the good and the bad] will be equal, which is contrary to reason and justice. Every person has to meet his Lord and to present himself before him to give the account of his deeds.

Another possible interpretation is that the attached pronoun (hee) refers to verb 'kadh' (working hard). Given this interpretation, the translation of the verse would be: "O man, you have to work hard constantly to reach your Lord, then you have to meet it." And the sense would be: 'you have to meet the good or bad consequences of your working hard.'

20) DO YOUR DUTY TO YOUR LORD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ وَأَخْشَوْا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَنِ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ {لقمان/33}

O YE PEOPLE! Fear your Lord and fear a Day when no father will avail his son, nor will a son avail his father at all. Indeed, the promise of Allah is truth, so let not the worldly life delude you and be not deceived about Allah by the Deceiver.

Brief Explanation^{xix}:

Drawing on the great danger presented by a stormy sea and how it puts things

into perspective as described in previous passages in this surah,, an even greater danger - in comparison with which the danger of the sea appears ever so small- is reminded about in this verse. This is the danger of the day when all relations are severed, parents and children are separated and preoccupied with their own positions; when each soul stands on its own, without support, unable to call upon anyone for help.

The horror described here is psychological, measured by its effect on hearts and souls. Nothing severs blood relations and ties between parent and child, and nothing makes everyone preoccupied solely with their own positions unless it be a fear totally unknown to people. The call to fear God is accordingly the call which can save humanity on that day. God's promise is indeed true and it will never fail. There can be no avoidance of this very difficult situation. No one can escape the accurate reckoning and the fair reward, when none can avail another of anything. "Let not, then, the life of this world delude you." It is full of lure, luxury and comfort, but it is limited in duration, and it is only a test to determine the eventual reward. "And let not deceptive thoughts about God delude you." Let no comfort, work, or interest delude you. Above all, let no devil tempt you, for there are many devils, such as money, power, authority, desire, fancy and misdirected passion. Each has its own lure and temptation which can be very deluding. Fear of God and remembrance of the Day of Judgement, however, should be enough to protect believers from all such temptations if their belief is firm that this life is temporary and our real purpose is to achieve success in the hereafter.

21) CERTAINLY THE PROMISE OF GOD IS TRUE

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ {فاطر/5}

O YE PEOPLE! Assuredly Allah's promise is true. So let not the life of the world delude you, and let not the Deluder delude you concerning Allah.

Brief explanation^{xx}:

"The promise" in this ayah implies the promise of the Hereafter to which allusion was made in the preceding sentence, saying: "And to Allah return all matters."

When we get engrossed in the pleasures of this world and run towards what perceives to be shining gold, we are deceived. Life of this world is very short and has to end one day. That would be the days when we will begin our new life. The life whose success will depend on what we do in this short tenure we are sent to spend on earth. If we remain deceived that the world is an end in itself and that there is no Hereafter when one will have to render an account of one's deeds: or that even if there is the Hereafter, the one who is enjoying life here will enjoy life there, too.

Satan, presented in this verse as a great deceiver, deceives us by making us believe:

(1) that there is no creator at all or

(2) that Allah after having once created the world, has retired and has now practically nothing to do with the universe any more or

(3) that Allah no doubt is running the universe, but He has taken no responsibility of providing guidance to man: therefore, revelation and prophet-hood are a mere deception and/or

(4) that since Allah is All- Forgiving and All-Merciful. He will forgive one whatever sins one might have committed, and that He has some beloved ones too: if one remains attached to them, success and salvation are assured.

Prophet ﷺ advised us to live in this world like a traveller. If traveller starts building property and loving a place on the way through, remaining busy in decorating it and glorifying it, he is certainly not be able to do enough to reach his real destination. We should therefore stay focussed on our real goal and not get deceived by lures of this world.

22) IT IS YE THAT HAVE NEED OF GOD

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ {فاطر/15}

O YE PEOPLE!

You are they who stand in need of Allah, while Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy.

Brief Explanation^{xxi}:

If a person is under the delusion that Allah stands in need of his or her help and if he or she doesn't accept Him as God, His Godhead will fail, and if he or she does not serve and worship Him, He will incur some loss, then it should be known very clearly that it is you who needs him and depend on him in everything. You cannot remain alive for a moment if He does not keep you alive, and does not provide you with the means by which you remain alive in the world and function. Therefore, when you are told to adopt His service and obedience, it is not because Allah stands in need of it, but because upon it depends your own success here as well as in the Hereafter. If you do not do so, you will be harming your own selves only, and not Allah in any way.

The word used in this ayah 'Ghani' implies that Allah is the Owner of everything: He is Self-sufficient and Independent of all. He does not stand in need of anyone's help. The word 'Hamid' implies that He is Self-Praiseworthy: someone may praise Him, or may not, but He alone is worthy of hamd (praise and gratitude). These two attributes have been used together because one would be 'ghani' even if one did not do any good to anyone by one's wealth. In such a case one would be ghani but not hamid. One will be hamid only in case one does not draw any benefit for oneself but benefits others in every way from the treasures of his wealth and resources. Since Allah is perfect in these two attributes, it has been said: "He is not just Ghani (self-sufficient) but such Ghani as is worthy of every kind of praise and gratitude, for He is fulfilling your needs as well as the needs of all other creatures, including those who do not accept his obedience. But those who disobey are harming their own selves despite being reminded and warned.

23) THE MOST RIGHTEOUS IS THE MOST HONOURED

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ {الحجرات/13}

O YE PEOPLE! O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

Brief Explanation^{xxii}:

In the preceding verses the Muslims were addressed and given necessary instructions to safeguard the Muslim community against social evils. In this verse the whole of mankind has been addressed to reform it of the great evil that has always been causing universal disruption in the world - Racism, that is, the prejudices due to race, color, language, country, and nationality.

On account of these prejudices man in every age has generally been discarding humanity and drawing around himself some small circles and regarding those born within those circles as his own people and those outside them as others. These circles have been drawn on the basis of accidental birth and not on rational and moral grounds. In some cases their basis is the accident of being born in a particular family, tribe, or race, and in some particular geographical region, or in a nation having a particular color or speaking a particular language. Then the discrimination between one's own people and others is not only confined to this that those who are looked upon as one's own people are shown greater love and cooperation than others, but this discrimination has assumed the worst forms of hatred, enmity, contempt and tyranny. New philosophies have been propounded for it, new religions invented, new codes of law made and new moral principles framed; so much so that nations and empires have made this distinction a permanent way of life with them and practiced it for centuries.

The Jews on this very basis regarded the children of Israel as the chosen people of God and even in the practice of their religious rites looked upon the non-Jews as inferior to the Jews in rights and rank. This very discrimination gave birth to class distinctions (varnashrama) among the Hindus according to which superiority of the Brahmins was established, all other human beings came to be regarded as inferior and unclean and the shudras cast into the depths of disgrace and degradation. Every person can see for himself even in this 20th century what atrocities have been committed against the colored people in Africa, Australia, Asia and America on account of the distinction between the white, brown and the black. The treatment that the Europeans meted out to the Red Indian race in America and to the weak nations of Asia and Africa had the same concept underlying it. It was this ras

They thought that the rights and property and honor of all those who had been born outside the frontiers of their own land and nation were lawful for them and they had the right to plunder and take them as their slaves and exterminate them if need be. The worst examples of how the nationalism of the western nations has turned one nation against the others and made it their bloodthirsty enemy have been seen in the wars of the recent past and are being seen even in the present time. In particular, if what was manifested by the racism of the Nazi Germany and the concept of the superiority of the Nordic race in the last World War is kept in view. One can easily judge how stupendous and devastating is the error for whose reform this verse of the Quran was revealed.

In this brief verse, Allah has drawn the attention of all mankind to three cardinal truths:

(1) *The origin of all of you is one and the same. Your whole species has sprung up from one man and one woman. All your races that are found in the world today are, in fact, the branches of one initial race that started with one mother and one father. In this process of creation there is no basis whatsoever for the divisions and distinctions in which you have involved yourselves because of your false notions. One God alone is your Creator. Different men have not been created by different gods. You have been made from one and the same substance. It is not so that some men have been made from some pure and superior substance and some other men from some impure and inferior substance. You have been created in one and the same way; it is not also so that different men have been created in different ways. And you are the offspring of the same parents; it is not so that in the beginning there were many human couples which gave birth to different populations in the different regions of the world.*

(2) *In spite of being one in origin, it was natural that you should be divided into nations and tribes. Obviously, all the men on the earth could not belong to one and the same family. With the spread of the race it was inevitable that countless families should arise, and then tribes and nations should emerge from the families. Similarly, it was inevitable that after settling in different regions of the earth, there should be differences of colours, features, languages and ways of living among the people, and it was also natural that those living in the same region should be closer in affinity and those living in remote regions not so close. But this natural difference never demanded that distinctions of inequality, of high and low, of noble and mean, should be established on its basis, that one race should claim superiority over the other, the people of one colour should look down upon the people of other colours, and that one nation should take preference over the other without any reason. The Creator had divided the human communities into nations and tribes for that was a natural way of cooperation and distinction between them. In this way alone could a fraternity, a brotherhood, a tribe and a nation combine to give birth to a common way of life and to cooperate with each other in the affairs of the world. But it was all due to satanic ignorance that the differences among mankind created by Allah to be a means of recognition, were turned into a means of mutual boasting and hatred, which led mankind to every kind of injustice and tyranny.*

(3) *The only basis of superiority and excellence that there is, or can be, between man and man is that of moral excellence. As regards birth, all men are equal, for their Creator is One, their substance of creation is one, and their way of creation is one, and they are descended from the same parents. Moreover, a person's being born in a particular country, nation, or clan is just accidental. Therefore, there is no rational ground on account of which one person may be regarded as superior to the other. The real thing that makes one person superior to others is that one should be more God-conscious, a greater avoider of evils, and a follower of the way of piety and righteousness. Such a man, whether he belongs to any race, any nation and any country, is valuable and worthy on account of his personal merit. And the one who is reverse of him in character is in any case an inferior person whether he is black or white, born in the east or the west.*

These same truths that have been stated in this brief verse of the Quran have been explained in greater detail by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in his addresses and traditions. In the speech that he made on the conquest of Makkah, after going round the Kabah, he said:

Thank God Who has removed from you the blemish of ignorance and its arrogance. O people, men are divided into classes: the pious and righteous, who are honourable in the sight of Allah, and the

sinful and vicious, who are contemptible in the sight of Allah, whereas all men are the children of Adam and Adam had been created by Allah from clay. (Baihaqi, Tirmidhi).

On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, in the midst of the Tashriq days, he addressed the people, and said:

O people, be aware: your God is One. No Arab has any superiority over a non-Arab, and no non-Arab any superiority over an Arab, and no white one has any superiority over a black one, and no black one any superiority over a white one, except on the basis of taqwa (piety). The most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most pious and righteous of you. Say if I have conveyed the Message to you? And the great congregation of the people responded, saying: Yes, you have, O Messenger of Allah. Thereupon the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Then let the one who is present convey it to those who are absent. (Baihaqi).

In a Hadith he has said: You are all the children of Adam, and Adam was created from the dust. Let the people give up boasting of their ancestors, otherwise they will stand more degraded than a mean insect in the sight of Allah. (Bazzar).

In another Hadith the Prophet(peace be upon him) said: Allah will not inquire about your lineage on the Day of Resurrection. The most honourable in the sight of Allah is he who is most pious. (Ibn Jarir). In still another Hadith he said: Allah does not see your outward appearances and your possessions but He sees your hearts and your deeds. (Muslim, Ibn Majah).

These teachings have not remained confined to words only but Islam has practically established a universal brotherhood of the believers on the basis, which does not allow any distinction on account of color, race, language, country and nationality which is free from every concept of high and low, clean and unclean, mean and respectable, which admits all human beings with equal rights, whether they belong to any race and nation, any land or region. Even the opponents of Islam have to admit that no precedent is found in any religion and any system of the success with which the principle of human equality and unity has been given practical shape in the Muslim society, nor has it ever been found. Islam is the only religion which has welded and combined innumerable races and communities scattered in all corners of the earth into one universal ummah.

In this connection, a misunderstanding also needs to be removed. In the case of marriage, the importance that Islamic law gives to kufv (likeness of status) has been taken by some people in the sense that some brotherhoods are noble and some mean, and matrimonial relations between them are objectionable. But this, in fact, is a wrong idea. According to the Islamic law, every Muslim man can marry every Muslim woman, but the success of the matrimonial life depends on maximum harmony and conformity between the spouses as regards habits, characteristics and ways of life, family traditions and economic and social status, so that they may get on well with each other. This is the real object of being equal and alike. Where there is unusual difference and disparity between the man and the woman in this regard, lifelong companionship will be difficult. That is why the Islamic law disapproves of such intermarriages, and not for the reason that one of the spouses is noble and the other mean, but for the reason that in case there is a clear and apparent difference and distinction in status, there would be a greater possibility of the failure of the matrimonial life if the marriage relationship was established.

The standards of high and low that the people have set up of their own accord, accordingly, are not acceptable to and approved by Allah. May be that the one who has been regarded as a man of high rank in the world is declared as the lowest of the low in the final judgment of Allah, and maybe that the one who has been looked upon as a very low person here, attains to a very high rank there. The real importance is not of the honor and dishonor of the world but of the honor and dishonor that one will receive from Allah. Therefore, what man should be most concerned about is that he should create in himself those real qualities and characteristics which make him worthy of honor in the sight of Allah.

24)DON'T BE DELUDED AWAY FROM THE TRUTH

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَأَنَّى تُؤْفَكُونَ {فاطر/3}

O YE PEOPLE! Remember the favor of Allah upon you. Is there any creator other than Allah who provides for you from the heaven and earth? There is no deity except Him, so how are you deluded?

Brief Explanation^{xxiii}:

This verse is reminding people of God's blessings, emphasizing that God is the only One who creates and provides sustenance for His creation, and wondering at how people lose sight of this truth when it is so clear and obvious.

Nothing is needed more than the mention of God's blessings for people to see, feel and recognize them. Nevertheless, they do forget them. The earth around them and the skies above them give them abundant blessings and unlimited sustenance, in every step and at every moment. It is God the Creator who gives all this. They are asked here whether there is a different creator who provides them with all the good things in their hands. Obviously, they cannot say this. Indeed, they did not even claim this during their worst period of idolatry, associating all sorts of partners with God. Since there is none other than God to create and provide, why do they not remember and express gratitude? Why do they not address their gratitude to Him alone and express their thanks by praises and prayers? Indeed "There is no deity other than Him." How is it that they turn away from this indisputable truth? "How can you turn away?"

It is most singular that anyone should turn away from this clear truth, evidenced by the constant sustenance they are provided with from heaven and earth. Even more singular is for a person to turn away from it all while admitting that all sustenance comes from God alone.

25)WHAT STOPS YOU FROM COMING BACK TO YOUR LORD, O MANKIND?

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ {الإنفطار/6}

O YE PEOPLE! what has deceived you concerning your Gracious Lord

Brief Explanation^{xxiv}:

The beautiful verse is calling all human beings to reject the delusions and deception and come back to their Lord. What has come between us and our merciful Lord? What is stopping us from embracing the truth and reject the deception we have fallen into. Life of this world is short and each moment is

taking us nearer and nearer to the time when we will leave everything we possess and go empty handed to meet our Lord. How can we be disloyal to our Master who gave us everything, who fed us even when we were in wombs of our mothers. Our Merciful Lord is calling us to come back to Him. To become the one who love him and He loves them. Why has human being forgotten the promise he made to his Lord? What is luring us away from the truth. When would the time come when we will change? How much more lectures do we need? How much more books do we need to read? How much more advice do we need to be given? When will the time come when we will go running towards our Lord? When will the time come when we will meet our Lord with tearful eyes and repent for the hours and days we kept running away from Him? His mercy is waiting for us? When will rise up and embrace the message?

“Has not the time yet arrived for the believers that their hearts should melt with the remembrance of Allah and should submit to the Truth sent down by Him” (Quran 57:16)

O Allah! Yes, the time has come. I repent to you sincerely my Lord. Forgive me and make me from among those who you love. I want to be under your love and your mercy. I want only you my Allah. Make me from among your sincere servants. I return to you my Lord with tears in my eyes, my head bowed down with shame and my heart filled with hope for your mercy. To You we belong and to You we shall return.

Notes:

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- i (Quran 2:21 – Explanation derived from Maarif ul Quran)
ii (Quran 2:168 – Derived from Maarif ul Quran and Fi Zilal il Quran)
iii (Quran 2:179 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
iv (Quran 4:1 – Explanation derived from Maarif ul Quran and Fi Zilal il Quran)
v (Quran 4:170 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
vi (Quran 4:173 - Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
vii (Quran 5:130 – Explanation derived from Tafsir Ibn Abbas and Fi Zilal il Quran)
viii (Quran 7:26 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
ix (Quran 7:35 – Explanation derived from Maarif ul Quran)
x (Quran 7:158 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran, explanation of word Umme by Shiekh Saleh Al-Munajjid, Tafsir Al-Qurtubi and prophecies about Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as explained by Dr. Zakir Naik)
xi (Quran 10:57 – Explanation derived from explanation of diseases of hearts elaborated by Al-Basair Islamic Media)
xii (Quran 10:104 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
xiii (Quran 10:108 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
xiv (Quran 22:1 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
xv (Quran 22:5 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
xvi (Quran 22:49 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran and Siraj ul Bayan)
xvii (Quran 22:73 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
xviii (Quran 84:6 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran and Maarif ul Quran)
xix (Quran 31:33 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
xx (Quran 35:5 – explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
xxi (Quran 35:15 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
xxii (Quran 49:13 – Explanation derived from Tafheem ul Quran)
xxiii (Quran 35:3 – Explanation derived from Fi Zilal il Quran)
xxiv (Quran 82:6 – Explanation derived from a lecture by Dr. Yasir Qadhi)

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